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by Wilhelmina Hill

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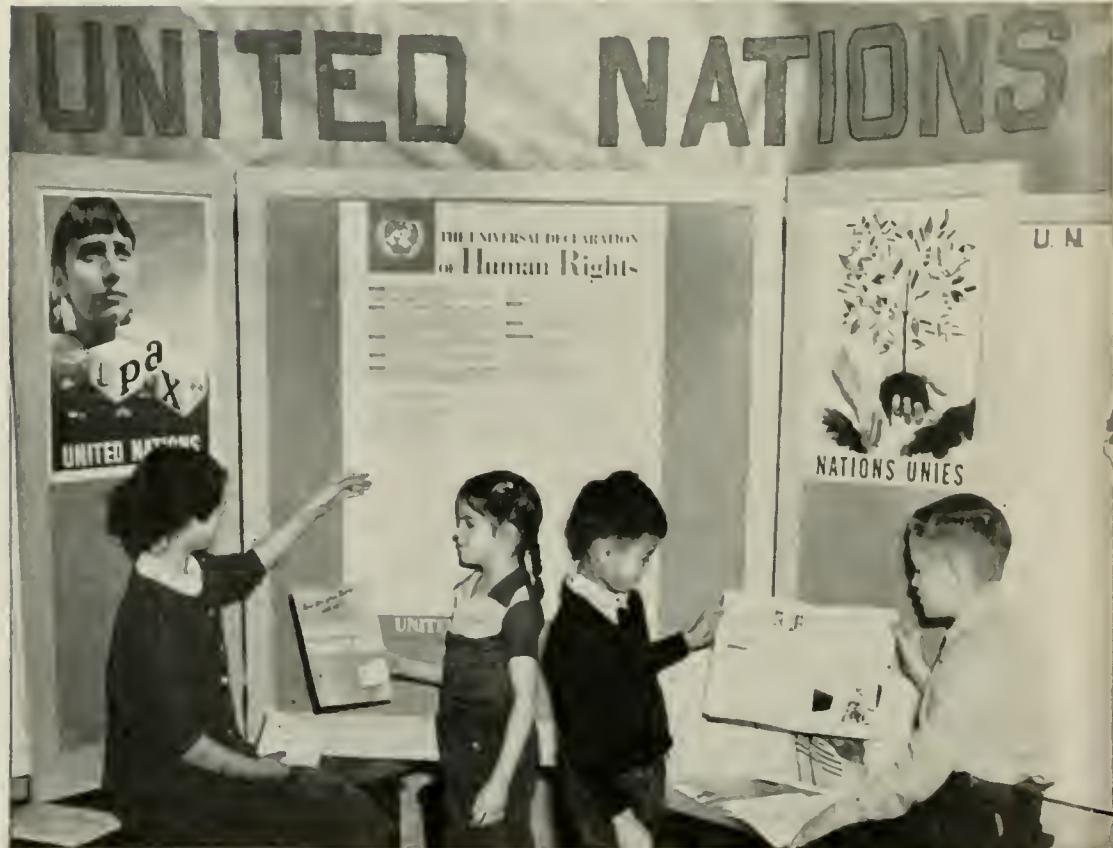
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made clear to children in any instructional situation which deals with these materials. Some Articles of the Declaration in which elementary school children can see relationships to their own problems are singled out for special mention. Some principles to be used in such studies are developed and stated. Lastly, illustrations of what is being done in the study of human rights in elementary schools in various parts of the United States are offered as suggestions.

Schools and individual teachers need to find a place in their crowded programs for emphasis on rights and responsibilities of individuals that will also point up the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

GALEN JONES, *Director*  
*Instruction, Organization, and Services Branch,*  
*Division of State and Local School Systems*



Courtesy, Minneapolis Public Schools

**Human Rights—A part of every child's learning.**

# *How Children Learn About Human Rights*

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ONE OF THE most important things that children need to learn is the business of getting along together. In the process, they are making practical applications of the principles involved in the Declaration of Human Rights. The ability to recognize one's own rights and at the same time respect the rights of others, does not just happen. First of all, it takes real effort on the part of *parents* to make the kind of home in which each child has the right to express ideas and opinions, and has a part in making decisions such as choosing a new dress or suit, deciding when to go to bed, what to eat, or helping to decide whether the family will take a summer vacation or buy a television set.

## *Using Situations Involving Human Rights*

*Teachers* need to realize that when the child comes to school he brings attitudes that are good toward some people, bad toward others. *Teachers* must accept each child as he is, and expect that in a classroom which is organized in a democratic way, he can learn gradually that every person has rights that must be recognized and protected.

In school, *children* themselves have certain rights together with responsibilities. Each child has the right to a place where he can work comfortably, to a place to put his wraps and materials where they will be safe, to a feeling of security because he is liked and wanted, to express his ideas, to disagree with others courteously, and to have a part in planning activities and in making decisions that affect him as a member of the group.

With these rights go corresponding responsibilities. The child must not interfere with the comfort and security of other children. He must listen to other children's ideas as they listen to his. He must expect that other children will disagree with his ideas from time to time. He must realize that decisions of the group may not always agree with the decisions he would like to see made. And he must learn to behave in these ways because he sees the fairness of so doing, and because he wants to rather than because he is required to.

In order to be a good citizen in his community, State, Nation, and world, a child must be a good citizen at home and in his school community.

There are many situations in the school day that can be used to point up rights and responsibilities of girls and boys. Often it is possible to relate these to the Declaration of Human Rights. The teacher with imagination and ingenuity, and an understanding of children, uses a situation such as the following:

### A NEW CHILD ENTERS SCHOOL

When the fifth-grade girls and boys come into Miss Judson's room on Monday morning, they see that a new girl has just been seated in Tom's group which organizes itself around a table for six. The teacher introduces Tom to the newcomer and suggests that he and the other children at the table get acquainted with the new member of the class and then introduce her to the others.

The small group learns that her name is Jean, she has moved to town from a small community in the southwestern part of the State, she is living two blocks from school, her father is working at the gas station near the post office, and she has a brother in fourth grade. Tom, as chairman, introduces Jean, tells where she came from, and says that Susan will help her through the first day. Miss Judson and the children have agreed that every new child who enters their room needs friendship in a new place, and has a right to feel secure and happy in order to do good work.

Not all children will be immediately accepted by the group. That is where the teacher steps in to give guidance to help children see themselves in the same position as the newcomer. If the children have seen a copy of the Declaration of Human Rights in the hall, the library, or in their own classroom, this is the place where the teacher can point up Article 13—"Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state." Jean's father was offered a new job and the family moved without having to ask anyone whether or not they could do so. It may be possible and desirable to let children know that in some countries a person must at all times have an identity card, must register with the police when he enters a town or city for the first time, and must have permission to move from one place to another.

### VISITORS COME FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

Our Government is bringing many teachers from other countries to visit schools in the United States. One of the important purposes of their coming is to get acquainted with teachers, with children and their parents, and with the community. These visitors have things to learn from us and things to teach us. When the visitor spends several weeks in the same school, children have an opportunity to get to know the visitor as a person. A teacher-trainee comes from Israel to stay 6 months. She visits schools in the East, North, Midwest, and South. For a month she visits in Grand Rapids, Mich., spending 2 weeks in the same school where children have an opportunity to ask her questions about schools, children, herself, and her family, including her little son; and to examine books, pictures, and objects that the visitor has brought with her.

Such personal contacts give boys and girls an opportunity to see what a person from another country looks like, how she acts and speaks, what some of the customs of present-day Israel are, and why and how she has come to this country. This is the point where the teacher can use the visit to discuss Article 13 of the Declaration which states that a person shall have the right to leave one country and go to another; and Article 15 which gives every person the right to a nationality. A natural extension of this discussion may lead to investigating children's backgrounds to find whether parents and grandparents were born in the United States, and if not what nationality they changed from in order to become citizens of this country.

## SOLVING GROUP PROBLEMS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is springtime and the children of the upper grades are playing ball in one section of the school ground. At the same time the boys come in to report that Bill batted a ball that broke a window of the house nearest the school, the irate owner arrives to ask, "Who is going to pay for my broken window?"

Everyone wants to talk at once. Miss Barber has a hard time to get the excited boys calmed down. Several of them have remarked, "Bill broke it. He ought to pay for it." The girls haven't said anything because they are waiting to hear the whole story.

Miss Barber helps the children talk the problem through far enough to suggest that since everyone has a right to be heard, they ought to hear from one of the players, from someone who was on the sidelines, and from Bill himself. The girls will be an impartial jury because they were not involved. When all the evidence is in, the teacher helps to guide the discussion with such questions as, "Since Bill was a member of the team, might it not just as easily have been someone else in the group who broke the window? Is there such a thing as group responsibility rather than individual responsibility? What practical ways of solving the problem can the group suggest?" Miss Barber agrees to advance the money so that a committee chosen from the room can go personally to the next-door neighbor to say they are sorry to have made him extra work in replacing the window, and to ask the cost so that they can plan to earn enough money to pay for it.

Out of this experience there develops the belief on the part of the group that it doesn't pay to make snap judgments; that everyone involved in and interested in a situation has a right to be heard; that sometimes a whole group has a responsibility for the action of one of its members; and that better planning should be done in the use of the playground so that accidents such as that of the broken window won't happen in the future.

Again, it is at this point that the teacher helps children to see the relationship of their problem to the Declaration of Human Rights. Although there might be several Articles that could be interpreted to have meaning for this situation, it is Article 10 that is singled out—"Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him."

## USING BOOKS AND STORIES TO BUILD ATTITUDES AND UNDERSTANDINGS

The wealth of books now available to teachers and children is an important means of introducing boys and girls to problems in human relations which involve rights and responsibilities. In the book *Fair Play*<sup>1</sup> children are helped to see chiefly through pictures and with brief descriptions, how far people have come from the days of the cave man, in learning to get along together. Although there is tension in the world today, many countries have been able to get together to form the United Nations. This organization has been compared to the 13 colonies which struggled to form a United States of America in the early days of our own country.

Some local radio stations have broadcast programs in the *Books Bring Adventure Series*. Some of these programs have been made into records each of which dramatizes an interesting incident from a book for and about children. Such a book is *The Level Land*,<sup>2</sup> a story of the underground in Holland during World War II. This story tells clearly how the people of that country struggled to preserve their rights and freedoms. The question for teachers and children is, "Would we be willing here in the United States to make the sacrifices and endure the hardships of the characters in the book, in order to preserve our rights and freedoms?"

An issue of *Childhood Education*<sup>3</sup> which appeared several years ago was entitled "The Discipline of Understanding Each Other." In this issue were stories of children of a number of countries, their culture, their customs, their songs, their recipes for cooking special dishes, and some helps for teachers to show that boys and girls must know and appreciate each other if the nations of the world are to develop common understandings. Such understandings are basic to realizing why the other person interprets the very same words of the Declaration in ways that may be different from our own.

<sup>1</sup> Leaf, Munro. *Fair Play*. New York, Frederick A. Stokes, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> DeJong, Dola. *The Level Land*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Childhood Education*. Volume 20, No. 8. Washington, D. C., Association for Childhood Education International, 1944.

Or the story of *The Moved Outers*<sup>4</sup> may be used to show the rights of our Japanese citizens were for a time not recognized during World War II. This story shows how children themselves shared in the problems of their parents, and that rights set forth in the Declaration were not considered at that time.

## *What Learnings Can Be Expected of Children?*

From the time that children reach school in the morning until they leave at the end of the day, every hour is crowded with situations that call for give and take on the part of child with child, child with the group, and child with teacher and other adults. The teacher needs ability to identify these situations and to use skill in helping the children to recognize that their own everyday problems involve human rights. If the teacher is autoeratic in her methods of working, it will be difficult to give children such opportunities. It will be equally difficult if she has a philosophy which permits children to do as they please. A classroom that is organized democratically is essential to the teaching of human rights. In a recent yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the authors point out, "Schools which do not respect the dignity of each individual child within the classroom cannot teach children to be concerned with the rights of people in far distant lands."<sup>5</sup>

An example of the influence of the teacher in the classroom is the story of a year-round camp school for children, where the younger group had read and heard about the dictatorship in Germany before World War II. Because this was a school where children helped with the planning, newcomers often thought they would be happier "if the teacher would just tell us what to do." After discussion of what a dictatorship is like, the children decided that they would like to have their teacher act as a dictator for at least a day. They agreed that they would not move about, speak, make suggestions, or volunteer for responsibilities. They would do only what they were told, when they were told.

But after they had tried a day of this sort, with every child required to stay in his seat, with assignments written on the board, with an old-fashioned

<sup>4</sup> Means, Florence C. *The Moved Outers*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1945.

<sup>5</sup> Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. *Organizing the Elementary School for Living and Learning*. Washington, The Association, National Education Association, 1947.

type of question-and-answer recitation of what was in the textbook, with the teacher giving directions for every activity, and no opportunity for the children to participate, they decided that one day was enough. There was one child, a newcomer, who said, "This seems all right to me. School is always like this at home." But the majority said, "I'll never vote for a dictatorship again." They voted to go back to the type of classroom where each child had a share in working out problems and sharing experiences with others.

### THE TIME TO BEGIN

Teachers actually begin the study of human rights with their children in the earliest years. Although prejudices may not be expressed in words until boys and girls are in the middle years of the elementary school, they are probably felt by children in the primary grades if teachers, parents, or other adults give them a bad example. Teachers need to work with parents on this problem in study groups or conferencees. Such prejudices may become a fixed part of the individual's personality that no amount of later education can change.

Most children of kindergarten or first-grade age come to school with the hope and expectation to like and be liked. But if Jimmy continues throughout his first weeks in school in the kindergarten to take a toy and go off in the corner to play with it, the teacher interests him in a block-building activity with another child and then gradually enlarges the group to three or four children. In the first grade a little girl puts the doll in a buggy; wheels it around by herself while other children are carrying on dramatic play as a family in the playhouse. The teacher suggests to the child and to the group that she be the older sister who takes care of the baby, but who comes home to help the mother get lunch.

It is in these early years that a child often uses force to get what he wants. He may hit, push, pull, fight to get a toy, a particular chair, or a book. He has not yet learned to say, "It is mine," or "May I have it now?" or "It's my turn." The teacher may well begin with such a situation as this to help children see that everyone's rights and needs must be considered in deciding who shall have the toy, the book, or the chair, and for how long. Every added experience, whether it be reading in a small group, choosing a partner to work or play with, planning the school day, or going on an excursion, involves recognizing other people's rights as well as those of the individual.

### AS CHILDREN GROW OLDER

Usually by the time the child reaches third grade he has learned to express himself effectively to get what he wants, unless he is unusually shy. He uses

words instead of force to get what he wants or to persuade the other fellow to share. If he spoils another child's painting or if he fights a smaller child on the playground, the teacher will know about it. Oftentimes the children will want to enforce more severe penalties for infringing on the rights of others than will the adult. It is the teacher's place to raise the question, "Why did you spoil the picture?" or "Why did you fight?" and "What can we do to help you?" At about the third-grade level, children can be helped to look at situations objectively, and to suggest what can be done about relations that need improving.

In the upper grades children may take responsibility for carrying on the work of a school council that will be used to solve those problems that are common to all classes in the school. There are such problems as, "How can each group have play space on the playground at the same time?" "How can the children themselves help to prevent schoolhouse windows from being broken during after-school hours?" "How can the all-purpose room which has sinks, gas plates, tools, and other equipment and materials for use, be shared by all groups?" A council meeting can become a mere training session for practice in parliamentary procedure, but with an alert teacher children can learn to analyze problems, to suggest possible solutions, to carry out studies or surveys, to evaluate information, to get opinions, to reach decisions, and to work out plans for action. They can also develop simple rules of conduct for all the activities of the school that are accepted by every class, that are in keeping with the Declaration of Human Rights, and that can be related to that document.



Courtesy, United Nations

**Children begin early to learn about Human Rights.**

Not all of the 30 Articles of the Declaration of Human Rights can be translated into situations that have meaning for boys and girls. At some time in their school lives they will want to read the Declaration, Article by Article. But the teacher will choose the time, the place, and the situation that can make one of the Articles real before she attempts to introduce children to it. The children of one sixth grade have attempted to restate the Articles of the Declaration in simple form. Many groups will want to make their own simplified statements when they have studied the Articles. Some examples of the sixth-grade children's interpretations follow:

## *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

### THE RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLE IN ALL LANDS

ARTICLE 1. Every person has the right to be treated like a brother.

ARTICLE 2. The thirty articles in this Declaration apply to all people no matter who they are, what they do, what they believe, or where they live.

ARTICLE 3. Every person has the right to live safely.

ARTICLE 4. No one should be forced to work as a slave.

ARTICLE 5. No one should be made to suffer inhuman treatment.

ARTICLE 6. Every person is entitled to his rights in any land at all times.

ARTICLE 7. All persons are equal before the law.

ARTICLE 8. Every person has the right to regain any rights he may have lost.

ARTICLE 9. No person should be punished for a crime he has not committed.

ARTICLE 10. Every person has the right to a fair trial in an honest court.

ARTICLE 11. Every person has the right to be considered innocent of a crime until he is proved to be guilty.

ARTICLE 13. Every person has the right to come and go as he wishes.

ARTICLE 14. A person who is persecuted in one country has the right to move to another country.

ARTICLE 17. Every person has the right to own and hold property.

ARTICLE 18. Every person has the right to freedom of religion.

ARTICLE 19. Every person has the right to have his own ideas and also has the right to express them.

ARTICLE 21. Every person has the right to vote as he pleases on a secret ballot in an honest election.

ARTICLE 23. Every person has the right to work for a just wage in healthy surroundings.

ARTICLE 24. Every person has the right to reasonable working hours with time for rest and paid holidays.

ARTICLE 26. Every person is entitled to an education.

ARTICLE 27. Every person has the right to enjoy the better things of life.

ARTICLE 28. Every person has the right to live in a land where all these rights are considered.

ARTICLE 29. Every person must be willing to do what he can to help others secure these rights.

Whatever the approach and the method of study, there are certain principles that hold good regardless of the age level of the children concerned. These principles have been developed in the illustrations used and are only summarized here. First of all, the classroom environment must be a democratic one. Children themselves must feel secure in their right to express opinions, but must be willing to abide by group decisions and to take responsibilities that go along with rights. The Articles of the Declaration of Human Rights cannot be taught as verbalisms, but must be made real and understandable through situations and experiences that have meaning for children themselves. The study of human rights should be started, so far as the school is concerned, as soon as children enter, and should begin with what the home has done or may have failed to do. There must be continuing emphasis at all levels upon human rights, if adult citizens are to have a clear idea of what the Declaration means, and a desire to accept the obligations involved.

## *What Some Schools Are Doing About the DECLARATION*

In many intermediate and upper grades, pupils are becoming acquainted with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and learning to use it in relation to their own problems and experiences. They are learning directly the responsibilities which accompany the rights specified in the various Articles of the Declaration. Primary, as well as older children, are having experiences in group living which will lead to an understanding of human rights and relationships.

In one Minneapolis school, a poster of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights hangs in the hall. Children refer to it when it can give assistance in their study of United Nations and its peoples and in the solving of their own problems.

One sixth-grade class in Minneapolis was faced with the problem of heated arguments. A discussion was held of the *pros and cons of arguments*. An

outgrowth of this discussion was a study of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Each Article was discussed and evaluated. The pupils made drawings of how the document relates to them. Drawings about article 19, on freedom of opinion and expression, showed pupils engaged in group work and in play activities. Drawings about article 21 on the right to take part in Government and to choose representatives, showed children carrying out these procedures in their own Civic League. Results of this study are being bound in albums to be sent to the United Nations headquarters in New York and to the Office of Education in Washington, D. C. The pupils hope that other teachers and children will see these albums or hear about them, and be stimulated to carry out similar studies.

Another sixth grade in the school rewrote the Declaration for the school's younger children. This class made a study which they entitled "Man's Search for Freedom." The problems decided upon by the children were:

Why is it that all the people in the world have not had the rights to which they are entitled?

How has man tried to gain his rights?

How can man eventually get the rights he should have?

Through their reading and discussion they learned of many documents that were milestones in "Man's Search for Freedom." They divided into groups to study the following documents:

Magna Carta

Atlantic Charter

Declaration of Independence

United Nations Charter

Constitution of the United States

Universal Declaration of Human

Bill of Rights

Rights

Emancipation Proclamation

\* \* \*

While real-life experiences in accord with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are provided throughout the school program, it is felt that the children from grades 4 to 12 should have, in addition, some direct contact with the written document. They should see its relationship to man's continuing struggle for basic freedoms, its relation to the American Bill of Rights, and should know the story of its writing.

The fifth- and sixth-grade social studies programs lend themselves admirably to the study of the extension of freedoms to all peoples. In the fifth grade, the pupils study about how the people of the United States won their freedoms originally and how we are trying to maintain those rights today. For the past 2 years, fifth-grade classes have written original scripts concerning appropriate sections of the Universal Declaration.

During their study of the people who came to the United States and why they came here, one sixth-grade class made effective use, in terms of extension of human rights, of a recording entitled "The Statue of Liberty,"<sup>6</sup> which

<sup>6</sup> Victor Record Album No. 960.

is read by Judith Anderson. Following a discussion of the rights included in this poem, the children made a careful investigation of the written guarantees covering these particular rights as they appear in the American Bill of Rights. Then they searched through the Universal Declaration to find whether or not the same rights were included there. They discussed the need for all persons to feel a responsibility for seeing that opportunities are guaranteed for the exercise of these rights.

\* \* \*

Another project of rewriting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was carried out by a high-school class of Portland, Oreg. Members of this class felt that "the adult phrasing and vocabulary of the important principles, developed after a long period of study and debate by the United Nations General Assembly, might create a barrier to the understanding of them by young people. Since the development of constructive attitudes in human relationships should begin at a very early age, this language barrier might prove a serious handicap in furthering this very important purpose." This simplified version of the Declaration for younger brothers and sisters was published by the Portland Public Schools and distributed to all elementary schools of the city.

\* \* \*



*Courtesy, Denver Public Schools*

**Children learn respect for each other through working together.**

In Ithaca, N. Y., opportunities are given in the lower elementary grades for the development of foundational experiences for understanding the Universal Declaration. Emphasis is on living and learning together. The Declaration is not taught directly at this level. In Ithaca schools there are children from various countries of the world. The teachers are consciously and directly developing the understanding of such concepts as: "The same things make all of us happy," and "We all have a right to talk some of the time, and to be heard."

Reports from the radio, daily newspapers, and magazines are giving many opportunities for motivating discussions of the Universal Declaration. The filmstrip series, *Our Heritage of Freedom*, has been used over and over by classes in grades 5 and 6 to give an understanding of the freedoms which people have been fighting for through many centuries—the Swiss, the English Barons in the time of Magna Carta, and people in other times and places.

Each elementary classroom in Ithaca is supplied with a poster or booklet copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. When the freedoms that Americans possess are studied, the children and their teacher carry through to ascertain what attempts have been made to extend these freedoms.

\* \* \*

At one school in Wilmington, Del., sixth-grade children are learning about the "right to take part in the Government" by participating in weekly class meetings where every child has a part in agreeing upon certain behavior standards which are set up under the title, "Our Classroom Constitution." This is used by the group as a guide in solving problems in which the actions of an individual or a small group are not in the best interests of the class or the school. They are learning to concede to everyone the right to speak freely, even if they disagree with what is being said.

Fifth-grade pupils are gaining through experiences such concepts as:

All people can be free.

Each person is responsible for his own actions as a member of a group.

Individuals and groups are dependent on each other.

Group problems are best solved by group action.

Respect for others and their way of life is an American ideal. Children are gradually beginning to realize that they can be free to make decisions, plan group action if each one within the group has self-discipline and can consider the wishes of everyone within his group, and that their class group must consider other groups and individuals within the school.

This class has studied the problems of freedom and group relations in the home and in the community in which they live, always coming back to the fact that freedom is possible only within a framework of discipline. Later

they plan to study the rights of people wherever they may live, especially those rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

One of the experiences this class had which gave opportunity to demonstrate living by our principles of freedom, human rights, and responsibilities, was an overnight camping trip. Here the children experienced a total living situation: living, eating, sleeping, working, playing, and planning together. Cabin groups, work details, and study groups were planned by the children, each group with its leader. In such a situation the children realized more clearly than before that each child in a group has certain rights and each must do his share for the comfort and happiness of the entire class. A similar plan of group work and responsibility is being followed in the classroom for the development of projects and the solution of problems. Under the leadership of the class president the whole group works together. Within the class there are five smaller groups, each with its leader and working on problems and projects.

Second-grade children are learning a great deal about human rights and responsibilities as they try to understand and evaluate how families work and play together. Children have included in their study the work done by mother, by father, and by children in the home; how families play together; kinds of jobs fathers and mothers hold outside the home; and services to the home by persons and agencies in the community. The group has visited plants and other places where fathers and mothers work.

Third and fourth-grade children are being helped to understand basic concepts of human rights through living and growing in an atmosphere where all individuals are important as they work together to develop an attitude of consideration for each other. Ted in the fourth grade feels free to say to his teacher, "I really didn't deserve that calling down. I was talking to Ned, but we were talking about our work." Ted and the teacher can talk the matter over until each is satisfied with the outcome. Children throughout the school should have the same right as Ted.

\* \* \*

Most of the efforts to teach about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Westerly, R. I., have been through an integrated approach rather than through separate units.

In one sixth-grade class, the pupils studied the Universal Declaration in connection with a social studies unit on "How a Nation Was Made from Thirteen States." Here the pupils studied and compared the United States Bill of Rights with the Universal Declaration. Several topics for further study took shape during the discussion: Battle for human rights; When rights conflict; How rights are constantly being broadened; and Comparison with the Four Freedoms.

Pupil-sponsored morning programs have provided excellent opportunities for integration with current affairs. Various issues in the news relating to education and to employment have afforded a fertile field for considering several Articles from the Declaration—in particular Articles 1, 2, 4, 16, 18,

19, 23, 26, and 27. For example, "Are there children in the United States who do not have as good an opportunity for education as we have?" is a problem that boys and girls can discuss.

At one stage of a unit, "Westward to the Rockies," a contrast was made between education on the frontier and modern American education. The teacher capitalized on the situation to introduce Article 26 on our right to education, and our responsibility to make the most of our opportunities.

Through such procedures as those described the sixth-grade pupils have become aware of the meaning and importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

\* \* \*

A sixth-grade class in Cleveland, Ohio, learned about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in connection with the study of United Nations. The children had received materials from the United Nations Headquarters in New York. They were especially interested in the work of the United Nations as it affects the children of the world. One member of the class brought several dozen photographs from the company where her father was employed. These photographs showed how people were being helped by such organizations as the International Refugee Organization. They learned, too, of the ways in which the Commission on Human Rights is promoting respect for the observance of human rights and freedoms. Additional information was secured from daily papers, conversation with adults, and from the library. Parents reported on the discussions in their homes which had resulted from the children's interest in the unit.

\* \* \*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is being read, interpreted, and discussed by many upper-grade elementary pupils in the Chicago Public Schools. Increasing emphasis is being placed on the growth of good human relationships as the basis for an understanding of human rights. The Human Relations Committee of the Chicago schools, through its pilot programs, is attempting to encourage the development of new techniques and practices which will promote this learning through living.

\* \* \*

In Long Beach, Calif., a sixth-grade class developed a script on the United Nations which was used in a broadcast over the school's FM radio station KLON. In this script some of the basic principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are stated in the simple language which children can understand.

A teacher's handbook on *The United Nations* has been prepared primarily for the secondary schools. It has been used in the elementary schools wherever possible and suitable. Along with the other materials on United Nations, there are specific references to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

## *Kinds of Experiences Provided*

The experiences selected for a realistic study of human rights should provide opportunity for group attack on problems that are interesting to children, suited to their maturity level, and related to the immediate needs of their everyday living. Children need to learn to plan, work, play, and evaluate through cooperative techniques. They should learn to respect the rights of others. They should learn about their own rights. They need to learn always to assume their share of the responsibilities that come with group experiences and that accompany rights and freedom. Planning and having a breakfast at school, writing and producing a radio program, planning and producing a school newspaper, and planting a school garden are examples of some of the many experiences through which these things can be learned.

Citizenship experiences in which pupils participate in school government offer excellent opportunities for experiencing human rights, relationships, and responsibilities. Both student councils and classroom organizations provide such experiences in many of our elementary schools.

Certain areas of the social studies curriculum provide good opportunities for learning about human rights. Among these are: family living, recreation, living in the school, community life, and people of other communities and other lands. The history of our country, from its early days to the present, gives the story of man's struggle for rights and freedom in America, including the documents involved, such as the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and the Emancipation Proclamation.

Direct contact and experiences with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights may be had in intermediate and upper grades. The Declaration may be displayed in poster form where it is easily referred to. Simplified versions may be written for the younger children by upper-grade or high-school pupils. Where this is done, great care must be taken that the meaning not be changed.

As has been pointed out, children may study those Articles (such as the ones concerning freedom of opinion, freedom of speech, and the right to an education) which are understandable and useful in their problems of living which involve human relationships.

Intermediate and upper-grade children may learn about the work of the Commission on Human Rights of United Nations in drafting the Declaration, and the problems they encountered in finding the exact wording to which all members of the Commission would agree. For example, some of the women on the Commission would not agree to the words "All men . . ." For, said they, "We women in our country would be denied our rights." Children of all ages may participate in celebrating United Nations Human Rights Day on December 10 which was designated for such observance by the President of the United States. Frequently children represent the various nations and

dramatize some aspects of the work of the United Nations that is especially interesting to them, and that relates to human rights.

## Where Can Materials Be Secured?

Listed are a number of sources from which reference materials on human rights may be secured. These materials include study guides, sets of posters, work kits, and pamphlets. For the study of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, copies of the document may be secured in poster or pamphlet form from United Nations Headquarters as indicated.

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW., Washington 6, D. C. Conference report, human rights handbook.

DIVISION OF PUBLIC LIAISON, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington 25, D. C. Current reviews, reprints, bulletins.

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, Midston House, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y. Bulletins, pamphlets.

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS SERVICE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, N. Y. Human rights publications of UNESCO and UN may be purchased. Exhibition albums, yearbooks, pamphlets, reports.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Ill. Articles in *Elementary English*.

OFFICE OF EDUCATION, FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY, Washington 25, D. C. Reprints, articles in *School Life*, radio scripts and recordings (may be borrowed from the Radio Script and Transcription Exchange); consultative services (Division of State and Local School Systems).

UNESCO RELATIONS STAFF, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington 25, D. C. Work kits, pamphlets, posters, reprints, film list.

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION, UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, 42nd Street and First Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in poster form, a set of four human rights wall charts, pamphlets, reports, a film strip (loan).

UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS, 2 Park Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. Reprints of speeches of United States representatives to United Nations.





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**How Children Learn To Read**

**How Children Use Arithmetic**

**How Children Learn To Write**

**How Children Learn About Human Rights**

**How Children and Teacher Work Together**

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